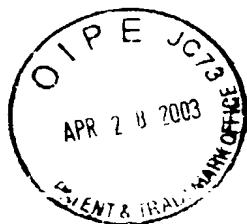


199178US-0



1731

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE

IN RE APPLICATION OF :
TAKESHI KUSUDOU ET AL : EXAMINER: DERRINGTON
SERIAL NO: 09/703,718 :
FILED: NOVEMBER 2, 2000 : GROUP ART UNIT: 1731
FOR: CERAMIC-MOLDING BINDER :

RECEIVED
MAY 08 2003
GROUP 1700

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 CFR 1.116

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20231

SIR:

Responsive to the Final Office Action dated November 26, 2002, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the following amendment and remarks.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend Claims 1 and 6 as follows:

1. (Twice amended) A ceramic-molding binder, comprising a vinyl alcohol polymer having an ethylene unit content of 2 to 19 mole %, a polymerization degree of 200 to 2,000, a degree of saponification of 80 to 99.99 mole %, a total content of carboxyl group and lactone rings of 0.02 to 0.4 mole %, wherein the carboxylic acid and lactone ring content in the vinyl alcohol polymer satisfies the following Formula I:

$$-1.94 \times 10^{-5} \times P + 0.044 \leq \text{content} \leq -1.39 \times 10^{-4} \times P + 0.42 \quad (1)$$